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Eighth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 1332 (2000) of 14 December 2000, the Security Council decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) until 15 June 2001.

2. By its resolution 1341 (2001) of 22 February 2001, the Security Council demanded that the parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement (S/1999/815, annex) implement fully the Kampala plan and the Harare sub-plans for disengagement and redeployment of forces without reservations in the 14-day period stipulated in the Harare Agreement, starting from 15 March 2001. In the same resolution, the Security Council urged the parties to the Lusaka Agreement to prepare and adopt, not later than 15 May 2001, in close liaison with MONUC, a precise plan and schedule, which, in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement, would lead to the completion of the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Council also urged the parties to the conflict, in close liaison with MONUC, to prepare, also by 15 May, prioritized plans for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of all armed groups referred to in annex A, chapter 9.1, of the Lusaka Agreement.

3. The present report is submitted in accordance with the above resolutions and reflects developments since the Secretary-General's seventh report on MONUC of 17 April 2001 (S/2001/373).

II. Political developments

4. At my request, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo immediately after the Council's consideration of my seventh report (S/2001/373) in mid-April. While in Kinshasa, during his meetings with President Kabila and senior government officials, the Under-Secretary-General received unequivocal assurances of the commitment of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the Lusaka peace process. During his meetings with Jean-Pierre Bemba, Chairman of the Front de libération du Congo (FLC), in Gbadolite, and with the President of the Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie (RCD), Mr. Adolphe Onusumba, in Goma, Mr. Guéhenno emphasized the importance of the disengagement process in the implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and urged greater cooperation with MONUC. During his visit, which also took him to Kisangani, Kananga and Kalemie, the Under-Secretary-General defined the objectives of United Nations involvement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and called upon all parties to re-establish a climate of trust and mutual confidence in order to enhance cooperation and achieve sustainable peace.

5. In mid-April, President Kabila restructured the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo through new ministerial appointments. At the swearing-in ceremony for the new cabinet on 23 April, the President cautioned the new ministers to guard against corruption and respect the rule of law,

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principles that would help to create the conditions required for favourable consideration for economic assistance from international financial institutions.

6. In a note verbale dated 3 May 2001 addressed to me, the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations forwarded a statement by President Museveni concerning the report of the Panel of Experts on the Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2001/357). In his statement, President Museveni stated that Ugandan forces would shortly be withdrawn from the Democratic Republic of the Congo and advised that his Government was also considering withdrawing from the Lusaka peace process. In my response, I appealed to President Museveni not to abandon the process, which offered the best hope for stability in the region. In a letter dated 8 May 2001 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2001/461), the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations announced that Uganda would completely withdraw its forces from 10 locations (Basankusu, Dongo, Gemena, Gbadolite, Lisala, Bafwasende, Isiro, Butembo, Beni and Kanyabayonga) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and would continue to examine the wisdom of maintaining a presence in Buta and Bunia. He further stated that a presence would be maintained on the western slopes of the Ruwenzori mountains until Uganda's security interests had been addressed in accordance with the Lusaka Agreement. Although the letter stated that the Government of Uganda had decided that Uganda would remain a party to the Lusaka Agreement, it advised that the Government reserved the right to withdraw unilaterally from the Agreement if it continued to be dissatisfied with the apparent lack of political will to implement it.

7. In an encouraging sign of rapprochement, President Kagame of Rwanda travelled to Harare on 7 May for talks with President Mugabe. The two Presidents discussed efforts to accelerate implementation of the Lusaka Agreement and the security concerns of Rwanda.

8. On 8 May, President Obasanjo of Nigeria met with President Kabila in Kinshasa before continuing to Kigali for talks with President Kagame on the prospects for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

9. On 17 May, the day of the arrival in Kinshasa of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region, President Kabila repealed Decree Law No. 194, which had restricted the activities of political parties, and announced new measures governing the organization and functioning of political parties. The announcement has been seen as a significant step towards re-energizing the political environment and raising hopes for a broader political dialogue.

10. On 19 May, President Kabila hosted a mini-summit in Kinshasa, attended by President dos Santos of Angola, President Mugabe and President Nujoma of Namibia. At the conclusion, the allies issued a communiqué in which, inter alia, they reiterated their firm commitment to the Lusaka Agreement and called upon the United Nations to deploy an "appropriate and adequate peacekeeping force", taking into account the demands of the peace process. The communiqué also accused Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi of committing "genocide" in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

11. A meeting of the Central Organ of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution at the level of Heads of State and Government was held at Lomé on 19 May. The summit issued a communiqué expressing satisfaction at the new disposition of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the other parties to the Lusaka Agreement.

12. At a press briefing on 24 May, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo announced the conclusions of the Commission of Inquiry into the assassination of the late President, Laurent-Desiré Kabila. Although an assassin was named, the Commission reportedly implicated the Governments of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda and RCD in a wider coup attempt. The allegation was strongly rejected by the three Governments concerned and by the rebel movement.

13. On 4 June, the Minister for National Security of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mwenze Kongolo, visited Kampala to deliver a personal message from President Kabila to President Museveni. This follows a visit to Kinshasa in April by the Ugandan Minister for Foreign Affairs, Eriya Kategaya, and has heightened expectations that the two Heads of State will meet in the near future.

Inter-Congolese dialogue

14. Following intensive consultations by Sir Ketumile Masire, the neutral facilitator, representatives of the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the rebel movements agreed in Lusaka, on 4 May, on a set of fundamental principles to serve as the framework for the inter-Congolese dialogue.

15. In response to a call by Jean-Pierre Bemba, the Chairman of FLC, a number of civil society groups, principal political parties and the FLC and RCD rebel movements formed a grouping called "Union des forces congolaises pour le respect integral de l'Accord de Lusaka et la tenue du dialogue intercongolais" (UFAD). The formation of the group represents the first establishment of formal relations between civil and political groups based on Government-held territory and the rebel movement in the eastern provinces.

16. The neutral facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, announced to the Political Committee on 21 May that a preparatory meeting to the dialogue would take place on 16 July. The purpose of the meeting will be to decide upon the agenda, date and venue of the dialogue, as well as the criteria for participation. The preparatory meeting will be preceded by a visit to all 11 provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by two of the facilitator's senior associates, Mohamed El Hacen Ould Lebat, the head of Sir Ketumile's office in Kinshasa, and Archibald Mogwe.

17. The new political climate has facilitated the return of exiled political opponents, including Etienne Tshisekedi, the head of the Union pour la démocratie et le progrès social (UPDS), and Arthur Z'Ahidi Ngoma, a founding member of the RCD rebel movement. Both politicians have indicated their wish to become more involved in the forthcoming political negotiations.

Security Council mission

18. Between 15 and 26 May, the Security Council visited the Great Lakes region for consultations with the Heads of State of South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Burundi, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda and Rwanda, as well as the neutral facilitator for the inter-Congolese dialogue, Sir Ketumile Masire, and the facilitator for the Arusha peace process, Nelson Mandela. The Security Council also met with Jean-Pierre Bemba of FLC and Azarias Ruberwa of RCD, as well as representatives of religious groups, opposition political parties and civil society in Kinshasa. The report of the Security Council mission was issued on 29 May (S/2001/521).

III. Military developments

19. The military situation between the parties has remained generally calm, with significant ceasefire violations reported only around Bolomba in Equateur Province early in May. The Forces armées congolaises (FAC) alleged that FLC troops had attacked one of their patrols and laid mines in the Bolomba area on 11 May. Subsequently, FLC alleged that their positions had come under mortar fire from FAC on 22 May. Since then, the situation has remained relatively quiet.

20. RCD has reported numerous incidents involving attacks by the non-signatory armed groups, including the Congolese Mayi-Mayi militias, on both their forces and the local civilian population in the eastern provinces.

21. On 28 May, MONUC received reports that an attempted coup d'état by military elements in Bangui had been put down by the Government. However, shooting continued in the Central African capital for several days thereafter, amid further reports of the involvement of troops of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and units of FLC acting in support of the Government. The situation now appears to be calm.

Deployment of the Mission

22. As at 8 June 2001, MONUC had a total of 2,366 military personnel, including 497 liaison officers and military observers. Within the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in addition to Kinshasa, liaison officers are deployed with the headquarters of the rebel movements (Bunia, Gbadolite and Goma) and a further 24 liaison officers are stationed in the capitals of surrounding countries, including 17 officers as planning support to the Joint Military Commission. Military observer teams are positioned in 22 locations: Basankusu, Befale, Boende, Bolomba, Dubie, Gemena, Ikela, Isiro, Kabalo, Kabinda, Kalemie, Kananga, Kindu, Kisangani, Lisala, Makanza, Manano, Mbandaka,

Moba, Pepa and Pweto, and at Nchelenge in northern Zambia. In addition, MONUC has formed 28 teams of military observers to verify the disengagement of forces (see paras. 30-37 below).

23. All four sector headquarters are now operational, with the deployment of infantry guard units from Uruguay (at Kalemie starting 29 March); Senegal (at Kananga starting 4 April and at Mbandaka starting 27 April); Morocco (at Kisangani starting 20 April and at Goma starting 10 May); and in Kinshasa itself, with the deployment of 220 Tunisian troops on 20 May. The Government of South Africa, starting on 5 April, deployed one aero-medical evacuation unit, an airfield crash/rescue unit and six aircraft cargo-handling teams. Finally, Uruguay completed the deployment of a riverine unit of 176 personnel on 4 June (see annex to the present report).

24. By resolution 1325 (2000), of 31 October 2000, the Security Council expressed its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urged the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, peacekeeping operations included a gender component. The resolution also called on all actors to include a gender perspective when negotiating and implementing peace agreements. Under the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement or reintegration plan, the Mission will undertake a number of activities relating to female combatants or females accompanying ex-combatants to demobilization sites, together with relevant organizations involved in the process.

Cooperation of the parties

25. The parties have continued to provide satisfactory security for MONUC civilian and military personnel. The most serious threat to the security of United Nations personnel deployed in the field stems from lawlessness and the actions of armed groups. On 26 April, six personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were murdered in Jitso and 26 foreign nationals were kidnapped near Butembo on 18 May. In many parts of the country, particularly in the east and the north, insecurity is general.

26. MONUC has enjoyed good cooperation with the Government and its allies on both the political and the military level, though it is still awaiting a formal response to its request for authorization to operate a radio station. Cooperation with RPA and UPDF military commanders has also been satisfactory, apart from some instances of withholding information by RPA.

27. However, MONUC has continued to encounter difficulties and delays from RCD on a wide range of issues. A major concern is the procurement of goods and services; in particular, fuel and rations contracts cannot be executed due to RCD objections to their award to international companies rather than local suppliers. A similar attitude has been adopted by RCD regarding the exoneration from taxes on goods imported by international suppliers. In addition, RCD objects to some contractors on the grounds that they supposedly have corporate links with countries allied to the Government. RCD has also created obstacles for the occupancy of sites already identified in Kisangani, the presence of MONUC troops at airports and ports and the delivery of fuel bladders at Kalemie airport.

28. Permission to establish refuelling facilities at Kalemie and Manono was not given by RCD until 20 April and the Kalemie facility only became operational on 14 May. MONUC has also reported a withholding of information concerning RCD dispositions at Anzi, Bishimike, Kindu and Lusambo.

29. MONUC has also recently encountered persistent non-cooperation from FLC. Unreasonable delays were imposed on MONUC deployments to Basankusu, Emate-Loa, Bolomba and Befale, and thereafter the freedom of movement of observers deployed in these locations has been restricted. On 10 May, MONUC observers dispatched to verify the FLC position at Imese were detained on the grounds that the local commander had not received any written clearance for their visit; only after lengthy negotiations and contacts with the FLC Chairman were the observers and their helicopter released. On 22 May, MONUC observers in Basankusu were prevented from reaching the airport by FLC soldiers who refused to provide any reason. FLC has yet to allow MONUC to verify any of its positions. MONUC has also been the target of disinformation campaigns mounted by both RCD and FLC. The media campaign against MONUC was at its most inflammatory at the time of the arrival of the Moroccan contingent in Kisangani on 20 April and the deployment of military observers to Basankusu on 22 May.

Disengagement of forces

30. As indicated in my report of 17 April (S/2001/373, paras. 32-37), MONUC initiated the verification process with its monitoring teams based in Kalemie (sector 4). Verification subsequently began in the other three sectors in accordance with the Harare disengagement sub-plans, which calls for the parties to disengage their forces from the confrontation line and to withdraw them to new defensive positions specified in the disengagement sub-plans. MONUC was then to verify that disengagement had indeed taken place and to monitor the parties' movements thereafter to ensure that they continued to comply with the plan.

31. Following the deployment of United Nations infantry guard units in each of the four sectors, MONUC established verification and monitoring teams to supervise the movements of the forces pursuant to the disengagement plan. The level of cooperation from the parties varied from time to time and from location to location, but was generally satisfactory. MONUC also encountered serious logistical difficulties, in some cases requiring the establishment of forward refuelling bases because of the remote location of some of the new defensive positions.

32. Disengagement and verification are now almost complete in three of the four sectors. As at 4 June, 69 of the designated 96 redeployment positions had been visited and the disengagement of forces in those areas had been verified. In two locations north-west of Kabinda, FAC forces had not withdrawn to the stipulated positions. MONUC has since received assurances from allied task force headquarters that they will do so. In the Ikela area, one FAC battalion and one Zimbabwean engineer battalion still remain and to the north of the town there is a separation of only 1 kilometre between an FAC company and RCD forces. The allied Task Force Commander has repeatedly assured the MONUC Force Commander that allied forces will shortly withdraw from Ikela to positions designated in the Harare sub-plans. Preliminary observations by MONUC appear to indicate that this is indeed the case.

33. The one area where disengagement has been unsatisfactory so far is sector 1, in Equateur Province, where the rebel forces are controlled by Jean-Pierre Bemba, the leader of FLC. Mr. Bemba has repeatedly expressed reluctance to disengage his forces, many of which are more than 100 kilometres in advance of the new defensive positions they are supposed to withdraw to in accordance with the disengagement plan. In explanation of his reluctance to disengage, the FLC leader has cited fears for the safety of the civilian populations in the areas to be evacuated by his troops, owing in part to the possibility of reprisals from government forces as well as the reported presence of Interahamwe militia in the vicinity.

34. On 12 April, my Special Representative offered to deploy additional observers in the disengagement zone to provide reassurance to all parties and Mr. Bemba agreed to begin disengagement of his forces. After initial difficulties in inserting the observer teams, MONUC succeeded in deploying observers to Basankusu on 23 April, to Makanza on 7 May, to Bolomba on 15 May and to Befale on 16 May.

35. During the meetings of the Joint Military Commission and the Political Committee on 17 and 21 May, the FLC delegate continued to raise concerns over the civilian population and sought to link FLC disengagement to the deployment of MONUC civil affairs personnel in areas to be vacated by rebel forces. After being informed that MONUC humanitarian and human rights officers would be deployed during the week beginning 28 May, the FLC delegate agreed that his movement would disengage to agreed positions with effect from 1 June. This commitment was reiterated by Mr. Bemba during his meeting with the Security Council mission in Kampala on 25 May.

36. Starting on 31 May, MONUC reported initial movements of FLC forces back from the confrontation lines at Bolomba and Befale. MONUC observers have thus far been unable to verify the disengagement in Bolomba, as they are deployed on the FAC side and the area between them and FLC is mined and inaccessible. However, the MONUC team in Befale confirmed the FLC disengagement, reporting that trucks with soldiers and troops on foot had been observed moving to the north. The FLC Commander in Befale informed the team that his troops were moving to an area 15 kilometres to the north along the Basankusu-Befale axis. However, there is no indication that FLC forces are disengaging from Emate.

37. MONUC has also been working with the parties to secure the withdrawal of Ugandan troops and equipment from Bafwasende. RCD has refused to permit them transit via the airport at Kisangani and

MONUC has been pursuing the possibility of an exit either by road or through Isiro.

Withdrawal of foreign forces

38. Over the period from 23 May to 1 June, MONUC military observers monitored the withdrawal of UPDF troops and equipment from Isiro. On 26 May, MONUC observers monitored the start of Ugandan troop withdrawals from Gemena. A request has also been made for MONUC to monitor the withdrawal of a UPDF battalion from Dongo, beginning 3 June.

39. While MONUC observers reported that three Zimbabwean battalions were withdrawn from frontline positions over the period from 3 April to 1 May, there has been no information on whether these units were repatriated to Zimbabwe. Officials in Harare and at the allied task force headquarters in Kinshasa have advised that there may be some intention to reduce Zimbabwean force levels in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, but no formal notification or details have been made available.

Armed groups

40. The security situation in the eastern provinces remains highly volatile. RCD allege that armed groups have continued to launch numerous attacks in the Kivus and insist that Kinshasa is persisting in providing support for the armed groups. On 29 May, RCD announced that its forces had captured the airfield of Kilembwe in South Kivu which it alleged had been used by FAC to resupply former Rwandan Army forces (ex-FAR) and Interahamwe militias.

41. In a statement issued on 29 May, the RCD secretary-general accused the Government of seeking to transfer the war to the eastern regions, alleging a sharp increase in the number of attacks by armed groups since President Joseph Kabila assumed office. He stressed that RCD would not be satisfied with a "fake" ceasefire agreement on the front line while armed groups continued to attack in the Kivus and northern Katanga. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has denied that the Government was providing assistance to armed groups in the Kivus, observing that the Mayi-Mayi should be distinguished from the armed groups since they were Congolese citizens fighting against "forces of aggression".

42. During the meeting of the Political Committee on 21 May, an envoy from the Government of Burundi reported that a large-scale eastward movement of rebels of the Front pour la défense de la démocratie (FDD) had taken place over the past two and a half months. He alleged that FDD rebels based in the Democratic Republic of the Congo were being encouraged to leave that country and almost one third of the total number had returned to Burundi where they were responsible for the recent upsurge in violence in and around Bujumbura. The envoy alleged also that large numbers of FDD rebels had crossed into the United Republic of Tanzania from where they pose a potential threat to the stability of Burundi.

43. MONUC has received reports indicating that the Government has taken measures to canton several hundred Rwandan nationals who may have been serving in or alongside the FAC and allied forces. MONUC has not yet received any formal notification of this exercise or a request to assist in the repatriation or resettlement of those cantoned.

Situation in Kisangani

44. Rwanda and Uganda have continued to maintain their forces at a distance of some 100 kilometres from the centre of Kisangani. However, RCD military elements have remained in the city, with its leaders maintaining that security concerns do not allow them to withdraw their forces before the arrival of United Nations troops in sufficient numbers. RCD provides the civil administration, including the police force, for the city.

45. The arrival of the first contingent of Moroccan troops in Kisangani on 20 April was greeted with a rapturous welcome from the local population. The contingent and the MONUC sector headquarters are now well established in the city. During the meeting of the Political Committee with the Security Council mission on 22 May, the Security Council mission strongly called on RCD to demilitarize Kisangani pursuant to resolution 1304 (2000).

Planning for the withdrawal of foreign forces and for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of armed groups

46. In accordance with resolution 1341 (2001), the Joint Military Commission, in close collaboration with MONUC, has been developing plans for both the total withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the armed groups identified in the Lusaka Agreement. The initial efforts of the Joint Military Commission and the Political Committee in this respect are described in my report of 17 April (S/2001/373, paras. 43-49). The Joint Military Commission and the Political Committee continued to meet during April and May to strengthen and refine these drafts.

47. The two draft plans were discussed in great detail during the meeting of the Political Committee with the Security Council mission on 22 May. An account of that discussion, and the text of the plans, including the proposed timetable for the withdrawal of foreign forces, appear in the report of the Security Council mission (S/2001/521 and Add.1).

48. At their meeting with the Political Committee, members of the Security Council mission insisted that the parties should provide the necessary detailed information concerning the numbers, locations, assembly areas, withdrawal routes and timetables in order to allow the United Nations to make its own plans to assist the parties and to monitor the withdrawal of foreign forces. The Security Council mission also made it clear that the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of armed groups should be carried out against the background of close cooperation between Presidents Kabila and Kagame. Its terms should be strictly adhered to, and United Nations assistance would be provided taking into consideration the level of commitment shown by the parties in their compliance with the plan. The first essential element was for the parties to provide the required information, including the numbers, locations and armaments of the various armed groups, and the proposed sites of their demobilization areas. The Security Council mission cautioned strongly that the Council expected to see steady, consistent progress and strict adherence to all agreements and timetables, that momentum must be maintained and that violations would not be tolerated.

49. On the basis of the information to be provided, MONUC would have to draw up plans and modalities for the assistance to be provided by the United Nations. This could not be done before MONUC's mandate expired on 15 June unless the information was available in New York by 1 June. Only then would it be possible to use it as the basis for the recommendations in the report of the Secretary-General.

50. In the event, as at 8 June, only Uganda and Angola have provided information on the numbers, dispositions and armaments of their forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in respect of the plan for the withdrawal of foreign forces. Further progress in developing the concept into a detailed plan suitable for approval by the parties and subsequent implementation cannot be made until Namibia, Rwanda and Zimbabwe provide information on their particular forces.

Co-location of the Joint Military Commission with the Mission

51. MONUC continued to cooperate closely with the Joint Military Commission and maintained a team of liaison and planning officers in Lusaka for that purpose. During the reporting period, the four regional Joint Military Commissions have co-located with the MONUC sector headquarters in Kalemie, Kananga, Kisangani and Mbandaka, enabling members of the regional Joint Military Commissions to be actively involved in the verification of the disengagement and redeployment of forces. At the request of the Chairman of the Joint Military Commission, MONUC facilitated a visit by the Commission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 29 May through 2 June.

52. The Joint Military Commission dispatched an assessment team to Kinshasa from 20 to 26 April to assess the physical security requirements for its delegates in Kinshasa. The team also travelled to Brazzaville to investigate with the authorities of the Republic of Congo the possibility of temporarily housing some Commission delegates in that city.

53. Upon the recommendation of the Security Council mission to the Great Lakes region in May 2001, the Council has called on the Political

Committee to direct the Joint Military Commission to co-locate with MONUC in Kinshasa forthwith, or, alternatively, to show what further contribution to the process the Commission could make in its current situation.

IV. Humanitarian aspects

54. In the worst attack on humanitarian aid workers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in years, six ICRC workers were brutally hacked and shot to death on 26 April while on a humanitarian assessment mission some 60 kilometres north of Bunia. The dead included four citizens of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, one of whom was a woman, and two international staff, a man and a woman. During past months, many international workers in Bunia have received threatening letters from one of the ethnic groups in the area and MONUC withdrew one of its humanitarian officers for security reasons in April.

55. During the reporting period the number of refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in neighbouring countries stood at over 338,450 individuals, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The majority of the refugees are in the United Republic of Tanzania (114,436), the Republic of Congo (83,680) and Zambia (56,000). The total estimated number of refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo remained the same, with over 329,000 individuals. Angolan refugees, numbering 179,580, mainly settled in the Bas-Congo, Bandundu and Katanga provinces, and the 74,300 Sudanese refugees, settled in the north-eastern part of Orientale Province, constitute the majority of the refugee groups.

56. In a recent recalculation of the numbers of displaced persons by province around the country, benefiting from the gradual opening up of areas where access had hitherto proved very difficult, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has reported a total of 2,041,000 individuals. The highest numbers were found in the eastern provinces: North Kivu (620,000), South Kivu (373,000), Katanga (354,000), Orientale (220,000) and Maniema (132,000). The next highest concentration was in north-western Congo, where Equateur Province had an estimated 171,000 displaced persons. Other provinces with displaced persons included Kasai Orientale (114,000), Kasai Occidental (29,000) and Kinshasa (28,000).

57. Some 16 million people in the Democratic of the Congo are estimated to have critical food needs as a result of prolonged displacement, the rupture of traditional sources of supply due to war and the alarming increase in prices. Children were hardest hit by malnutrition, especially in the capital, Kinshasa, and the other major urban centres. The tangible decline in the agricultural production, the scarcity of hard currency necessary for consecutive food imports and the weakened purchasing power of the population at large have all contributed to a significant and lasting food deficit. In spite of the shortages, agricultural production in many parts of the country is still considerable; the supplies, however, do not reach the traditional markets in the present security situation.

58. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in close cooperation with my Special Representative, has advocated that the Government and rebel groups agree to establish humanitarian corridors, which would allow a resumption of food and other trade between Kinshasa and the eastern and northern provinces. Equateur Province is a traditional food supplier for Kinshasa's market and the rupture of commercial exchanges between the capital's market and its supplier due to the hostilities has resulted in hardship for both farmers in Equateur Province and consumers in Kinshasa.

59. The public health situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continues to be a cause for grave concern. Some 37 per cent of the population remains without access to essential medical facilities and less than 47 per cent has access to safe drinking water. Recent Government statistics indicate that 2 million people are infected with the AIDS virus, twice as many as in 1999. The eastern provinces have the highest rates, with the number of people infected having increased fivefold (from 4 to 22 per cent) over the past two years in towns such as Goma, Bukavu and Beni.

60. A mortality study released by the International Rescue Committee on 8 May estimates that, since the outbreak of fighting in August 1998, some 2.5 million deaths have occurred in the civilian population of the area in excess of the number that could have been expected without the war. The latest survey updated and expanded a study conducted in 2000, which estimated that 1,700,000 "excess" civilian deaths had occurred in the first 22 months of conflict. Like the 2000 study, the current report indicates that the overwhelming majority of deaths were related to disease and malnutrition —

by-products of a war that has ravaged the country's health-care system and economy. Persistent fighting and insecurity have driven hundreds of thousands of people into forests and jungles where they have had no access to food, medicine or shelter. War-affected areas, in turn, have been inaccessible to aid organizations because of insecurity.

61. Both studies found a proportionately smaller number of deaths — 350,000 in 33 months — directly attributable to violence. Even so, according to the study director, one in eight households surveyed have experienced the violent death of a family member during this period. Among the most disturbing findings is the disproportionate effect of the war on young children. The proportion of children below the age of two was shockingly lower than would have normally been expected. In two of the districts surveyed, Moba and Kalemie, an estimated 75 per cent of children born during the conflict have died or are expected to die before their second birthday.

62. During his recent visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Kenzo Oshima, called for the international donor community to increase its assistance in the coming months so that relief agencies could expand their capacity on the ground and increase the resources available to tackle the country's "massive humanitarian deficit". Mr. Oshima said that with the disengagement of combatant forces and the deployment of MONUC observers in frontline areas, access to vulnerable populations was improving and some civilians, such as those in Kabinda, a former frontline town, were already feeling the effects of the peace process. Mr. Oshima identified the need for special programmes to address the specific problems of child soldiers, violence against women, issues related to displaced women and children and psychosocial problems among war-affected populations. The Under-Secretary-General also said that, whenever conditions allowed, there would be a need to develop resettlement programmes for internally displaced persons and refugees to support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. Donors were urged to recognize that increased support for humanitarian and rehabilitation efforts at an early stage could yield real peace dividends. In addition, the Mission should take advantage of strong local networks of women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civic groups that have a grass-roots focus to undertake and implement many of the humanitarian activities that will be needed as adjuncts to its own programmes.

63. At the suggestion of MONUC, the establishment of a "peace boat" operation on the Congo River is nearing realization with the support of other United Nations humanitarian organizations. The departure of the first boat from Kinshasa to Equateur Province, carrying a cargo of goods and supplies for the population of that region, is foreseen during the month of July. The double objective of the operation is to encourage the relaunching of traffic on the river to permit the revival of economic activities in the region. The same boat will then proceed to Kisangani, which has suffered deeply owing to the lack of river traffic during the last three years of conflict. To establish these projects, MONUC is involved in facilitating agreement between the parties concerned (the Government, FLC and RCD) with regard to administrative, security and logistic details.

V. Human rights

Government-controlled territory

64. As indicated in paragraph 9 above, the Government has repealed Decree Law No. 194, which restricted the activities of political parties, and has established a new law dealing with the right to freedom of political opinion and association and participation in public affairs and elections. The impact of this new law on the liberalizing of the political climate has yet to be assessed. The Government, under a general amnesty, released over 700 detainees from prison, including political opponents and journalists, as well as eight individuals who had been detained in connection with the assassination of President Kabila. Five child soldiers sentenced to death by the Court of Military Order in Matadi, Bas-Congo, have also been released. The office of the human rights NGO, African Association for the Defence of Human Rights in Congo/Kinshasa (ASADHO), which was shut down three years ago, has been reopened.

65. However, some human rights abuses have continued, including arbitrary arrests and extortion. Restrictions on fundamental rights to freedom of expression and personal security have persisted. Members of human rights groups and newspapers have been detained for speaking out against human rights

abuses or for taking positions considered hostile to the Government. There are also disturbing reports indicating that detention centres only recently shut down by the new President are reappearing.

Territory controlled by the Front de libération du Congo

66. The killings of the six ICRC personnel in the vicinity of Bunia in April comes against a backdrop of ethnic massacres between the Lendu and Hema, which has claimed several thousand lives in the past year. In solidarity with the ICRC, all United Nations agencies have suspended their activities in the region until the culprits are apprehended and dealt with in accordance with the laws in force. A joint military investigative team from both FLC and UPDF has been set up to find the killers and bring them to justice. Following these killings, fresh fighting broke out between the Hema-Bagerere and the Lendu, around the Fataki and Djugu areas. Mediation efforts and human rights education initiatives are under way with the active participation of MONUC human rights officers and other humanitarian agencies.

Territory controlled by Rassemblement congolais pour la démocratie

67. In the eastern provinces, reports have been received of ethnic tensions and attacks by armed rebel groups and their allies; recent massacres of women and the rape of women and adolescent girls; the plundering or burning of villages and attacks on the civilian population; widespread banditry; and looting by armed groups and unpaid soldiers.

68. In South Kivu, unverified accounts have been received reporting that, on 23 April, armed men descended on Ilangi and murdered seven pregnant women who were waiting to deliver their babies at a health centre. Their bodies were thrown into the Ulindi River. These acts are reported to be a frequent practice used against persons suspected of favouring the opposing side. Six humanitarian agents, four women and two men of a Burundian/Dutch NGO, Memisa, were kidnapped on 11 May by members of FDD.

69. In northern Katanga, clashes between the armed groups and rebel forces and their allies have aggravated the insecurity of the region. The fields and fertile areas are occupied by the armed groups (ex-FAR, Interahamwe, FDD, Mayi-Mayi), while the towns and cities are occupied by RCD forces. As a result, the civilian population has been taken hostage by opposing camps with their freedom of movement severely restricted. Recently 12 women were reportedly kidnapped by the Mayi-Mayi, who subsequently killed 10 of them. On the night of 7 May, the villages of Kassama and Mwenge, north-west of Pweto, were reportedly attacked and robbed by 10 members of the Interahamwe who were said to be in FAC military uniform.

70. Nevertheless, civil society and human rights groups in the rebel-held provinces maintain their rights to free expression and association and continue to express criticism of RCD and its Rwandan allies. In addition to dozens of human rights associations, there are numerous development and humanitarian non-governmental groups, activist churches and independent journalists. Members of these groups regularly face physical assault, arbitrary arrest and detention at the hands of the authorities for their activities.

VI. Child protection

71. The situation with regard to the utilization of children as combatants remains a grave concern. MONUC has continued to report regular sighting of child soldiers throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. There are also growing concerns that the rebel movements in the eastern provinces may be increasing their recruitment of children in order to compensate for the disengagement and withdrawals of UPDF and RPA military units.

72. My Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, arrived in Kinshasa on 24 May for a 10-day visit. He met with President Kabila and members of his Government, including the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Human Rights, Social Affairs and Family, as well as with the commissioner for relations with MONUC. In the course of the discussion, President Kabila advised Mr. Otunnu that he had already issued a written order to the army not to enrol any more children and that his Government had ratified the Optional Protocol of the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts. Mr. Otunnu met also with the heads of United Nations agencies,

child protection officers from MONUC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNHCR, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), international humanitarian NGOs and civil society representatives, as well as with Adolphe Onusumba, President of RCD, and Jean-Pierre Bemba, leader of FLC.

73. During meetings in Kinshasa, Goma, Bukavu, Bunia and Kisangani, Mr. Otunnu advocated for the needs of all war-affected children, including displaced, refugee, malnourished and traumatized children, those who no longer have access to schools and health services, girls victimized by rape and child soldiers. For child soldiers specifically, Mr. Otunnu advocated the cessation of the recruitment, training and utilization of children as combatants, including the establishment of a monitoring system to ensure no further recruitment; access to military camps for joint military and civilian teams in order to undertake a survey of child soldiers to facilitate the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme; improved access to the affected population, in particular children, by the humanitarian agencies; improvement in overall security to allow the free movement of populations throughout the country; and reinforcement of the judiciary system to put an end to impunity.

74. As I mentioned in my seventh report (S/2001/373), a team of civilian and military enumerators visited government-controlled military camps in the provinces of Kasai Occidental, Katanga, Bas-Congo and Kinshasa to meet with child combatants and to prepare a preliminary profile of child soldiers in FAC. This exercise experienced some difficulties due to a communications breakdown between the military high command and the commandants of military units of the camps visited. The Ministry of Defence has since decided to organize an awareness seminar for the army, which will also facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive survey of child soldiers. As a result of UNICEF advocacy with the Ministries of Defence and of Human Rights, President Kabila has agreed to open this awareness-raising seminar and has requested the Ministry of Defence and UNICEF to organize it as soon as possible.

75. In my seventh report, I pointed out that UNICEF and ICRC were working closely together for the family reunification of the children from Beni, Butembo and Bunia who had been transported to Uganda by UPDF. The children are still at camp Kyankwanzi, Uganda, with their care supported by UNICEF. However, as a result of the recent murder of six ICRC staff, this key partner for the reunification has suspended its operations in the Ituri district. UNICEF has entered into an agreement with a local NGO, SOS Grand Lacs, to continue the process of family tracing so that reunification can be undertaken soon. However, under the current security conditions in Ituri Province, maximum caution must be exercised.

VII. Economic regeneration

76. In my previous reports on MONUC, I have alluded to the urgent need to alleviate the suffering of the Congolese people and improve the disastrous economic situation of the country. I believe that members of the Security Council share the view that it is imperative that the return to peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should be accompanied by an economic revival. I have therefore asked my Special Representative to monitor efforts aimed at regenerating the economic life of the country and assist such efforts and related initiatives whenever possible.

77. Following advice from both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the Government suspended the exclusive diamond-trading licence granted in 2000 to a foreign company and announced measures to liberalize the diamond trade.

78. Another important initiative being taken by the Government concerns renovation of the two power stations at the Inga dam, the largest electricity-generating facility in sub-Saharan Africa. The hydroelectric plant is currently operating at about 20 per cent capacity and only about 7 per cent of the Congolese population has access to electricity. Negotiations are being conducted for foreign investment of approximately $1 billion to renovate the facility.

79. In a move marking the resumption of development assistance from the European Union, on 4 May the European Commissioner for Development announced the disbursement of 120 million euros to finance poverty alleviation and the promotion of human rights. The Commissioner paid tribute to recent positive measures taken by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and confirmed the

will of the European Union to support the peace and reconciliation process. Both the IMF and World Bank have emphasized their willingness to support the Government and are providing advice on measures aimed at controlling inflation, corruption and the establishment of an efficient audit system. On 26 May, the Government announced the decision to liberalize the exchange rate for the Congolese franc, thereby eliminating the wide disparity between the official and market rates. Other measures included the removal of price controls over fuel products, a decision that addressed one of the underlying causes of fuel shortages in Kinshasa.

80. Recognizing that the reopening of the riverine network will have important benefits, not merely for trade and freedom of movement but also for confidence-building and strengthening national unity, MONUC has been working towards reopening of the Congo River by negotiating with the parties for the restoration of river traffic between Kinshasa, Mbandaka and Kisangani. During his visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in April, Mr. Guéhenno proposed the establishment of a Congo River Basin Commission, to be chaired by MONUC with the participation of all Congolese parties, the Governments of the Central African Republic and the Republic of Congo and United Nations specialized agencies. During its visit to Mbandaka on 20 May, the Security Council mission to the region declared the Congo River open for navigation, and the first barge carrying fuel for MONUC left Kinshasa en route to Kisangani via Mbandaka with a MONUC riverine escort. The deployment of MONUC will also contribute to the reopening of the road network and development in the areas where the force is deployed. In conjunction with potential donors, work is under way to prepare numerous small local quick-impact rehabilitation projects.

VIII. Financial aspects

81. My revised budget for MONUC for the current financial period ending 30 June 2001 amounts to $273.1 million and reflects additional resource requirements arising from the Mission's updated concept of operations endorsed by the Security Council in its resolution 1341 (2001). The Fifth Committee of the General Assembly has already considered the revised budget and recommended to the Assembly its approval. With regard to the 2001-2002 financial period, commencing on 1 July 2001, the Fifth Committee has recommended that the Assembly appropriate for MONUC an initial amount of $200 million covering the period from 1 July to 31 December 2001, pending submission of my proposed budget for the Mission for the full 2001-2002 period during the main part of the Assembly's fifty-sixth session. The Assembly action on the Fifth Committee's recommendations is expected shortly.

82. Therefore, should the Security Council approve my recommendations in respect of MONUC set out below, the Mission's initial resource requirements for the 2001-2002 financial period would be met from within the appropriation of $200 million to be granted to me by the Assembly.

83. As of 31 May 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the MONUC special account amounted to $32.7 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $2,320.2 million.

IX. Next steps

84. The steps taken so far by the Joint Military Commission and the Political Committee to comply with the requirement in resolution 1341 (2001) to produce plans for the orderly withdrawal of all foreign troops from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the armed groups identified in the Lusaka Agreement are described in paragraphs 45 to 49 above. Considerable additional work is required before the plans can serve as a suitable basis for a MONUC mandate in an eventual third phase of deployment. As noted in paragraph 49, most of the parties have so far failed to provide the detailed information requested by the Security Council mission during its meeting with the Political Committee in Lusaka on 22 May. Several more weeks, at least, may be required before precise operational plans and detailed sub-plans suitable for implementation can be finalized and adopted.

85. It would clearly be precipitous to enter a third phase of MONUC deployment before the completion of the disengagement and verification phase, and without the benefit of realistic and approved plans. Nevertheless, the momentum generated by the

disengagement of forces and the withdrawals of foreign forces must not be lost. Nor must the parties be permitted to view their new defensive positions as permanent. The Secretariat has therefore updated MONUC's concept of operations to ensure that the Mission has the necessary resources both to complete the current phase and to prepare itself for the complex and varied tasks within the next phase.

86. The revised concept, which was finalized during a visit of planners from the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to MONUC in April, envisages an initial stage during which MONUC would prepare for the transition to phase III. During this stage, the Mission would continue to monitor the presence of forces in the new defensive positions, as well as any further withdrawals of foreign contingents. For logistical and supply reasons, this would require the establishment of helicopter refuelling facilities at Manono, Ilebo, Boende and Basankusu, as well as the deployment of about 200 armed military personnel to protect equipment, facilities and supplies located at each of those four locations. Eight additional military observer teams would also need to be deployed for that purpose, as well as a 75-person military police unit.

87. MONUC will continue to monitor the new defensive positions and to verify any withdrawals of foreign military units from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An increase of 30 four-person military observer teams is estimated to be required for this task. MONUC may have to establish a mission forward headquarters in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Preliminary estimates call for up to 100 military observers to provide the staff. In addition, MONUC could be called upon to monitor the early demobilization and demilitarization of armed groups serving within FAC or allied forces. If so, an estimated 40 additional military observers would be required, for a total of 260 military observers over and above the present complement.

88. The importance of the demilitarization of Kisangani, in accordance with resolution 1304 (2000), and the role that the city could play in the economic and political regeneration of the country are obvious. Accordingly, an expansion of MONUC's presence in Kisangani is envisaged in preparation for this role. This would take the form of civilian personnel, including political, humanitarian, human rights, child protection and public information staff. Additional military observer teams, which would be tasked to assist RCD in completing its plans for withdrawal from the city and monitoring their implementation, would also be deployed. Another important function of all military and civilian units in the city would be to gather and analyse information in preparation for the initiation of the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme in a subsequent stage of operations. In particular, it would be necessary to gather as much information as possible about the situation in the Kivus. An increase in the size of the United Nations armed security unit will also be required. This would entail a commensurate increase in the strength of the military and civilian logistical support units in Kisangani.

89. A considerable expansion of MONUC's civilian presence is envisaged at the other three sector headquarters at Kalemie, Kananga and Mbandaka, making them integrated operational centres from where the full range of Mission activities can be conducted. Civilian officers would be deployed wherever there is a MONUC military presence. Political officers will also be deployed at some of the regional capitals. To enable MONUC to maintain proper records of minefields and conduct mine awareness campaigns for military observers and the civilian population of affected areas, a mine action centre will be established in MONUC headquarters, with subsidiary cells in each sector headquarters.

90. In determining mine action priorities, a gender perspective should be incorporated at every stage. This includes the design of mine awareness campaigns, the designation of priority areas for the removal of mines and unexploded ordnance, rehabilitation and prosthetic assistance for victims and the collection and analysis of data on victims.

91. There is also a significant gender aspect to other activities of MONUC. Women, girls and children have been among the principal victims and targets of the fighting, and have suffered disproportionately from the indirect effects of the conflict.

92. Female fighters are expected to be among those to be disarmed and demobilized. Furthermore, many of the male fighters will be accompanied by dependants, who will have to be accommodated in suitable conditions. The longer-term reintegration and/or resettlement of women accompanying the fighters will also pose its own particular challenges. The special

situation of women will need to be taken into account in dealing with humanitarian, human rights and child protection issues, as well as in developing the content of public information programmes. Accordingly, MONUC should be sensitized to these concerns through the provision of the necessary guidance and advice by a specialized unit created for that purpose.

93. The problem of assuring effective civilian administration, including the security and safety of the civilian population, in the areas to be evacuated by foreign forces remains a matter of concern. There is no question but that the parties to the Lusaka Agreement are primarily responsible for the security of Congolese civilians. Accordingly, in drawing up their plans for the orderly withdrawal of foreign forces, the Governments concerned should take this requirement fully into account.

94. The Congolese parties are also responsible for the safety of civilians in the areas under their de facto control. Until such time as longer-term arrangements are established, it is envisaged that the de facto authorities in place will continue to provide the administration and ensure the maintenance of law and order in the areas to be evacuated.

95. MONUC's role in these matters will therefore be very restricted, not least because of its small size and limited deployment. The deployment of civilian personnel, including human rights, child protection and civil affairs officers, will enable MONUC to monitor to some extent the development of the situation. These efforts will need to be reinforced through the eventual deployment of a civilian police component in the mission.

96. An initial survey indicates that Congolese police structures have survived throughout the country. However, the status of police officers working in the rebel-controlled areas may need to be clarified. Although these officers had been members of the Congolese national police before the outbreak of the conflict, they may not be acceptable to the Government unless a political arrangement is agreed upon to re-establish an integrated Congolese national police.

97. Many police officers are aware that a vacuum in the security situation will follow the withdrawal of the foreign forces. Although the local police are willing to accept the responsibility for maintaining law and order, years of neglect in terms of training, resources and equipment will make it exceedingly difficult for them to fulfil their responsibilities. In addition, insufficient and irregular salaries, which have made corruption commonplace, compounded by allegations of physical abuse, has led to mistrust of the police on the part of the local population.

98. It is therefore envisaged, for the first time, to deploy the nucleus of a Civilian Police component within MONUC, initially to be attached to the headquarters. This small unit, under an interim police commissioner, would conduct a more in-depth assessment of the policing institution, its needs and capabilities. The ultimate role of this component would be to prepare recommendations for an eventual expanded MONUC Civilian Police component wherever MONUC military personnel are deployed and to advise and assist the local authorities in the discharge of their responsibility to ensure the security of the population.

99. MONUC will also actively support the opening up of the internal waterway system, including through the deployment of the Uruguayan riverine unit as well as a second riverine unit of about 200 men to be deployed subsequently. Not only will the reopening of the rivers stimulate trade and facilitate the movement of persons and goods, it will also significantly reduce the operating costs of MONUC, which must at present transport all goods and personnel by air, at considerable expense. The importance of the economic dimension would also require the recruitment by MONUC of appropriate civilian personnel.

100. MONUC will also need to be strengthened through the addition of an integrated civilian/military planning section to coordinate support to the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the armed groups. This will enable MONUC to assist the Joint Military Commission with the further development of its draft plans and will strengthen the links already established with those humanitarian and development agencies able to contribute to the process. In view of repeated indications that MONUC may be called upon to assist with the repatriation or resettlement of former combatants cantoned in government camps (see para. 41 above), the necessary military and civilian support staff will need to be deployed accordingly as part of the transition to phase III.

101. As indicated in my sixth report (S/2001/128), MONUC will establish a public information capability

to enable it to explain and clarify United Nations intentions and activities. The primary vehicle for broadcasting MONUC's messages would be radio. It is therefore envisaged that a radio studio and FM transmitter will be set up in Kinshasa, with transmitters in Goma, Kisangani, Kalemie, Kananga and Mbandaka. Programming would cover the activities of MONUC, the peace process, the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme and, as appropriate, the inter-Congolese dialogue.

102. Human rights protection officers must be sensitive to the particular situation of the vulnerable groups and can benefit from the knowledge and experience of local human rights and other organizations. Future implementation of the programme for the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the armed groups will also add substantially to the work of the civilian sections. To strengthen further the civilian component of MONUC, it is my intention to appoint a Deputy Special Representative with specific responsibility for coordination within the Mission, as well as between MONUC and other United Nations agencies and donors operating in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

103. Given the scale of the country, the degraded communications infrastructure and the difficulties of access and mobility beyond major towns, the revised concept of operations provides for a progressive substantive build-up of capabilities in terms of personnel, logistics and equipment in order to position MONUC to respond in a timely and effective manner once the parties begin the processes of withdrawal of all foreign troops and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of the armed groups. The advance strengthening of MONUC logistic support capabilities to support the current and foreseen future deployment is of paramount importance. It will also be necessary to expand the Mission's medical capabilities, including the provision of medical evacuation by air.

104. The revised concept envisages an increase of up to 2,500 military personnel over the figure of some 3,000 authorized for the current mandate of MONUC, thus remaining within the force level of 5,537 approved by the Security Council in its resolution 1291 (2000) of 24 February 2000.

X. Observations and conclusions

105. I note with great interest, and am in substantial agreement with, the assessment of the Security Council mission that visited the Great Lakes region from 15 to 26 May. In particular, I share the same cautious optimism about the immediate future of the Lusaka peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also feel the same sense of foreboding with respect to the precarious situation in Burundi, which is closely linked to the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

106. It is gratifying to note that the parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo continue to adhere to the ceasefire. However, reports of the eastward movement of armed groups elements and their recent incursions into Rwanda, Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania are particularly disturbing. There is speculation that the armed groups are moving out of the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to evade participation in the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement programme, for which the parties and MONUC will now intensify their planning. However, there can be no lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo without a comprehensive settlement of the situation in Burundi. Accordingly, I take this opportunity to add my voice to that of the Security Council mission to the region in urging the Heads of State of the countries concerned to continue jointly to seek ways to remove their differences and reinforce areas of cooperation. In that sense, I am heartened by the recent visit of President Kagame to Harare to meet with President Mugabe, and by indications that President Kabila and President Museveni may soon be ready to meet. It would be particularly important for President Kabila and President Kagame to remain in close touch, especially over the question of armed group activity in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In this connection, any influence the regional Heads of State can bring to bear on the armed groups, including the Burundian groups, to refrain from violence, can only be helpful.

107. I welcome the Government's continuing cooperation with MONUC and call on the rebel movements to extend the same level of cooperation. The substantial compliance of the parties with the Harare disengagement plan, as monitored and verified by MONUC military observers, is also a matter for

encouragement. I note the reluctance of FLC to disengage its forces in Equateur Province. Though Mr. Bemba has taken some initial steps to fulfil the undertaking he made to the Security Council mission on 25 May to pull back on 1 June, his disengagement is by no means complete. MONUC will continue to monitor FLC disengagement until it is fully accomplished. MONUC will also dispatch military observers and civilian personnel as necessary to monitor any indications that the civilian population may be at risk once his forces have withdrawn. The Government also has a particular responsibility to cooperate in this respect by continuing to ensure the necessary discipline in its armed forces in Equateur Province and elsewhere.

108. The plans drawn up by the Joint Military Commission and the Political Committee, in consultation with MONUC, for the total withdrawal of all foreign forces from the territory of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of armed groups do not constitute a sufficient basis for further action by the United Nations at this point. Without significant additional detailed information, the Secretariat cannot draw up, nor can I recommend to the Security Council, specific adjustments to the mandate and the force structure of MONUC. I align myself with the strong request of the Security Council mission to the parties to provide, as soon as possible, the detailed information required.

109. Nevertheless, though incomplete, the substantial progress made in the disengagement of forces — phase II of MONUC deployment — demands an appropriate follow-up. It is also necessary to build on the initial work done in elaborating plans for the withdrawal of foreign forces and the disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, repatriation or resettlement of armed groups. I therefore recommend to the Security Council that it authorize a transition to the third phase of MONUC deployment. During this transitional phase, the Mission would perform the tasks set out in paragraphs 84 to 104 above. I would not at this stage request an increase in the authorized military strength of 5,537 officers and men.

110. That said, I would recall the breadth of the new tasks likely to face MONUC in an eventual third phase, as outlined in my seventh report (S/2001/373, paras. 93-110). The transitional stage that MONUC is about to enter will lead, if the parties continue to honour their commitments, to the full range of activities, with their associated problems and risks, envisaged for the third phase. That is likely to require a significantly larger force.

111. Even for this transitional stage, partly in order to prepare in good time for an eventual third phase, it will be necessary to expand considerably the civilian components of MONUC, including a new civilian police component, as well as its logistical capabilities, as outlined in paragraphs 88-104 above. It should be recognized that MONUC and the United Nations will be engaged in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for some considerable time to come. It would therefore be prudent to plan for the longer term and to begin now to provide the Mission with the resources it will need. To that end, I recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of MONUC for a period of 12 months, until 15 June 2002. In doing so, the Council will be signalling its commitment to the peace process and to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, with a view to stabilizing the situation in the subregion. In the context of the reporting obligations required of me by the Council, I would expect to revert during that period with recommendations for full entry into phase III when I consider the time to be ripe.

112. The announcement by Sir Ketumile Masire, the neutral facilitator of the inter-Congolese dialogue, that a preparatory meeting for the dialogue is to begin on 16 July, is to be welcomed. MONUC will continue to support the facilitator and looks forward to further developments in the conduct of the dialogue. The repeal, on 17 May, of Decree Law No. 194 banning political party activity is also a welcome step forward in this respect.

113. The announcement by the Security Council mission, during its visit to Mbandaka on 20 May, of the reopening of the Congo River, is of more than symbolic importance. Together with the proposed creation of a Congo River Basin Commission, which was proposed in April, it points the way to a revitalization of trade along the country's main artery, the inland waterway system. The recent deployment at Mbandaka of the Uruguayan river unit will also contribute significantly to this process. The benefits to the city of Kinshasa, which has seen its food supplies dwindle as river traffic has been blocked by insecurity, should also soon be apparent. MONUC intends to make increasing use of the river to supply its contingents,

thus easing its heavy dependence on expensive air transportation.

114. Finally, I wish to express my deep appreciation to my Special Representative, Kamel Morjane, to the MONUC Force Commander, Major-General Mountaga Diallo, and to all the women and men of MONUC, both civilian and military, for their continuing efforts, often under very difficult conditions, to help restore peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Annex

United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo: as at 8 June 2001

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*
Algeria	13			13
Bangladesh	9	7		16
Benin	18	2		20
Belgium		5		5
Bolivia		1		1
Burkina Faso	10			10
Canada	1	5		6
China	10			10
Czech Republic	5	1		6
Denmark	1	1		2
Egypt	25	1		26
France	1	2	3	6
Ghana	6			6
India	18	2		20
Indonesia	2	3		5
Italy		1		1
Jordan	22	6		28
Kenya	14	12		26
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	1			1
Malawi	17			17
Malaysia	7	11		18
Mali	1			1
Morocco		4	614	618
Mozambique	2			2
Nepal	13	1		14
Niger	12	1		13
Nigeria	21	1		22
Pakistan	16	15		31
Paraguay	10			10
Peru	4			4
Poland	1			1
Romania	17			17
Russian Federation	14			14
Senegal	12	15	539	566
South Africa	1	7	88	96

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*
South Africa	1	7	88	96
Sweden	2			2
Switzerland		1		1
Tunisia	19	4	220	243
Ukraine	9			9
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland		5		5
United Republic of Tanzania				
Uruguay	24	15	405	444
Zambia	5	5		10
Total	**363**	**134**	**1 869**	**2 366**

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